

**DDS-South Region
Regional Advisory and Planning Council
Meeting Minutes
February 18, 2009**

Members Present: Vice Chair John (Jack) Frost, April Dipollina, Nancy Kalal, Danielle Shepard and Mary McKay, Regional Director, DDS-South Region/Ex-Officio Member. **Members Absent:** Marianne Burke, Michael Del Sole, Steven Fusti, and Claire White.

Guests Present: Gail Canne, Dominick Dipollina, and Kim Wollschleager.

Minutes Recorded By: Jolie Crescimano-Goss, Executive Secretary, DDS-South Region

I. Vice Chairperson's Report

Call to Order - Vice Chair Frost called the meeting to order at 6:25PM.

Citizen Comment – None presented.

Review of the November 18, 2008, Meeting Minutes - A review of the November 18, 2008 meeting minutes ensued. In the absence of a quorum, Council vote was deferred to the next meeting. The minutes will be corrected to reflect April Dipollina's absence from the meeting.

Statewide Council of Developmental Services Update – Mr. Frost reported on the January 8, 2009, meeting of the Statewide Council of Developmental Services. Minutes of the meeting were distributed to this Council for their information.

DDS Trades Mtg. – Mr. Frost encouraged the Council to visit the Video Library Section of the DDS Website to view the video webcast of the February 9th Trades meeting. The Budget, Legislative proposals, Proposed Contract Changes, Rate Development Update, Unfunded Mandates and Health Services were among the topics covered at the meeting.

II. Regional Director's Updates

Budget Update – Ms. McKay presented an overview of the FY09 budget and shared the governor's proposed plan for mitigating the State's \$1.4B shortfall by June 30. Although DDS is affected by several rescissions imposed by the Governor, (i.e. hiring freeze, spending cuts, travel ban, purchasing restrictions) minimal service money has been cut from its' budget. New service development

for Wait List, grads, Age Outs, VSP and other targeted services continue. The region has; however, had to start an internal Wait List for newly eligible consumers for case management services and has ceased admitting new consumers to Public Residential and Day Programs. The Governor's plan to close the gap includes among other things, some use of the rainy day fund, state employee retirement incentive plan by 3/31, 20% fleet reduction, and manager furloughs. The Republicans have counter-proposed with a mitigation plan of their own. The Democrats have yet to release a formal proposal. A final plan has yet to be agreed to and voted on. Regardless of the outcome, DDS' priorities for the remainder of this fiscal year are:

- Complete requirements of the Wait List Settlement Agreement
- Finalize programs for all remaining June '08 grads and age-outs
- Continue to support VSP and B-3 referrals
- Provide 1x funds to providers
- Continue to fill direct care, nursing, and case management vacancies
- Maintain current services

Administratively, DDS will strive to effect purchasing cuts across the board, streamline work processes with an eye toward attrition, and reassign duties left by vacated positions, and most importantly stay focused on consumers and our core Mission.

The FY10 and FY11 budget shortfall is estimated to be \$8B. The governor's budget proposal eradicates \$6B of that debt, which was the amount thought to be needed in order to balance the budget at that time. The good news for DDS is that the Governor's proposed budget casts favorably on its' consumers and families in that it:

- Provides for continuation of services started this years
- Avoids cut to private provider reimbursement rates (although no COLA)
- Supports new high school grads and age-outs
- Annualizes growth in B-3
- Provides for growth in forensic services
- Funds dental services up to \$1M
- Recommends development of an autism waiver and minimal supports waiver as a way to bring revenue back to the State.

Commissioner O'Meara is scheduled to testimony on behalf of DDS before the Health and Hospitals Sub-Committee of Appropriations on February 20th at 10am at the LOB. Public testimony commences at 3pm.

CT FSC LOB Event – The CT Family Support Council & the Connecticut Family Support Network will host an Executive & Legislative “Meet & Greet” on Thursday, March 5th, 9-10:30 am, at the Legislative Office Bldg, Second Floor Atrium (flyers distributed). Attendees will have an opportunity to meet with

legislators and community leaders to thank them for their past support to families of children with disabilities and receive a copy of the Council's Annual Report which highlights its' priorities and recommendations for 2009. All are encouraged to attend this informal, yet important networking event in support of those with disabilities.

April mentioned that the CT Family Support Council is targeted in **H.B. No. 6375, REP. CAFERO, 142nd DIST.; SEN. MCKINNEY, 28th DIST. 'AN ACT CONCERNING REVIEW AND TERMINATION OF CERTAIN BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS'**, to implement the Governor's budget recommendations and to eliminate unnecessary or obsolete boards and commissions. **REF. GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION AND ELECTIONS**

Respite Center Update – Due to the current budgetary crisis, DDS has placed a hold on further respite center development. The positions from STS, which were originally earmarked to staff the region's new respite centers, are no longer available to us due to givebacks.

IFS Family Support Worker Service Satisfaction Survey – Ms. McKay shared the results of the IFS Family Support Worker Services Satisfaction Survey. Out of the 72 surveys distributed, 52 responses (72% response rate) were received. Overall ratings were good. Results on the effect of Family Support Worker Services on the need for placement were as follows:

38%	→	Never Considered Placement
37%	→	Much Less Need
12%	→	Some Less Need for Placement
9%	→	A Bit Less Need for Placement
4%	→	No Effect/Need More Services

Spring Family Forums – Ms. McKay asked for the Council's input on ideas for the 2009 Spring Family Forums. With the Waitlist Settlement Agreement coming to an end, the spring forums would be a perfect time for DDS to promote and share information on creative/alternative kinds of support options with families. Raising families' awareness of CTH, live-in companion, and professional parent support options would benefit the system as a whole, especially in light of these tough economic times. Creative ways of combining families' resources to address consumer needs could be explored too. Commissioner O'Meara and Deputy Commissioner duPree will attend the forums to speak to families about the upcoming budget. The forums will be held statewide beginning mid May. In response to a request for volunteers, RAC members Nancy Kalal and April Dipollina volunteered to sit on the planning committee. Once the locations, dates and times of the forums are set, committee members will be contacted.

Public Agency Meeting Requirements – Deferred to next meeting.

III. New Business

Membership Recruitment – It was noted that the Council has two open seats. Kim Wollschleager expressed interest in joining the council. The Council welcomed her offer and Mary will ask Jolie to prepare an appointment letter for the Commissioner's office. Mary suggested the Council consider areas of the region and constituency currently represented on the Council and seek to diversify whenever possible.

Nominations of Officers – **There were** no volunteers for a Nominating Committee. Nominations and election of officers deferred until the next meeting.

IV. Adjournment

With no further business before the Council, Vice Chair Frost adjourned the meeting at 8:00PM.

V. Next Meeting Date

The next meeting of the DDS-South Region Advisory and Planning Council is scheduled for March 25, 2009, from 6:00PM-8:00PM, at the Henry Carter Hull Library in Clinton.

Minutes Submitted By:

Jolie Crescimano-Goss

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Executive Secretary, DDS-South Region